

XII.—INDUS SAND LARK (*ALAUDULA RAYTAL ADAMSI* HUME) AND CRESTED LARK (*GALERIDA CRISTATA* LINN.)
LAYING IN THE SAME NEST.

Can you or any of your readers let me know if the following has ever been noticed before and if it is a regular thing?

On the 20th of this month I observed a lark's nest containing one egg and to all intents and purposes the nest was that of an Indus Sand Lark (*Audula adamsi*). In fact this lark was seen to rise from the locality and it was this which led to my finding the nest. The egg however appeared to be rather too large for a lark of this species; but as there was only one egg, and not wanting the bird to desert it, I did not examine it closely. I again went and examined the nest on the 23rd to obtain the full clutch and was surprised to find not two eggs but no less than five, three belonging to the Crested Lark and two to the Indus Sand Lark. The bird that flew off the nest on the second occasion was a Crested Lark (*Galerida cristata*). Now the point is, whom did the nest belong to? The size of the nest indicates that it belonged to the Indus Sand Lark as it is much smaller than that of the Crested Lark and the same size as other nests of the former in my possession. As the nest contained a full clutch of each of the birds, it shows that the nest was being shared by them and probably both helping in the matter of incubation.

GENERAL POST OFFICE,

KARACHI.

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Postmaster.

[There are instances in which an unusual number of eggs found in a nest is the product of more than one parent of the same species. There are again instances of birds laying their eggs in the disused nests of other species, not only habitual parasites such as the cuckoos, but species which customarily build nests for themselves. The appropriation of the nest of other species occurs quite commonly among certain birds, which build nests of their own. White-throated Munias may for example not only build their nests in the base of an eagle's nest or in the nest of a Scavenger Vulture, but they frequently appropriate the disused nests of Weaver birds. Marshall even found a sparrow's nest occupied by a pair of munias. The nest contained four sparrow's eggs and seven eggs of the munias. So far as we are aware no such instances have been recorded of larks. Indus Sand Larks, from the experience of Col. A. E. Butler, and Mr. R. C. Pitman, sometimes build a nest very similar to the nest of the Crested Lark and in the present case the Crested Lark may have appropriated the nest of the former. The writer of the note had the opportunity of discovering whether the fortuitous partnership between the two species extended to the incubation of the eggs or even the care of the young.—Eds.]